

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/588,288  
Reply to OA dated June 23, 2009

### REMARKS

Claim 1 is amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as their invention. The Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated June 23, 2009.

In the Office Action, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takashi et al. (JP 07-019369) in view of Itoi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,556,072). Reconsideration and removal of the rejection are respectfully requested in view of the present claim amendment and the following remarks.

The Office Action includes in the rejection, component (53) of Takashi et al., a pressure regulation screw-thread member, as part of operating shaft (14). However, it appears as though if component (53) is included as being part of operating shaft (14) then the operating shaft (14, 53) of Takashi et al. would not be movable in an upward direction for opening the fluid channel (12). This lack of being operable can be seen by referring to Drawing 1, which shows that if components (14) and (53) are connected as one, operating shaft component (53) would be restricted from moving upward by the top portion of the valve assembly. In other words, it appears as though shaft (14) is moveable up and down in component (53) of Takashi et al., thus if the two pieces (14) and (53) are put together as one piece, as stated in the Office Action, then the device would be inoperable.

In Takashi et al., when the separate component (a male threaded member) (53) and the stem

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(14) are made one piece, the stem rotates along with the male threaded member, resulting in the breakage of seal portion (13). In the present invention, the rotation of operating shaft(6) does not affect the seal portion, thus making possible the structure wherein "a male threaded portion (40a) is formed on the operating shaft (6) which is rotated for adjusting the elastic force."

In the Office Action, in the "Response to Arguments" portion, it is stated that Claim 1 does not claim a direct threaded engagement, but just a threaded portion formed at the upper end of the operating shaft. Claim 1 is presently amended in order to more clearly define the operating shaft.

In view of the amendment to Claim 1, and the above remarks, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takashi et al. in view of Itoi et al. as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of Kolenc (U.S. Patent No. 5,215,286). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection are respectfully requested in view of the present claim amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 3 depends from Claim 1, which is discussed above.

In view of the amendment to Claim 1, and the above remarks, removal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the aforementioned amendment and accompanying remarks, Claims 1 and 3, as amended, are believed to be patentable and in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

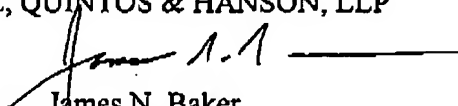
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If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned agent at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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